

That is one of the important reasons why this legislation is so important and why the resources and the investment are so much in the interest of this country and its future in terms of the ability to be able to compete.

Mr. President, this is a sound amendment that makes a great deal of sense for the reasons I have mentioned here and other reasons as well. I am hopeful that the Senate will accept it with an overwhelming vote.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4189

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the present amendment be set aside, and on behalf of Senator SPECTER, I send an amendment to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Hampshire [Mr. GREGG], for Mr. SPECTER, for himself and Mr. CRAIG, proposes an amendment numbered 4189.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To repeal section 13203 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 by restoring the Alternative Minimum Tax rates that had been in effect prior thereto)

On page 3, line 10, decrease the amount by \$4,700,000,000.

On page 3, line 11, decrease the amount by \$25,600,000,000.

On page 3, line 12, decrease the amount by \$51,000,000,000.

On page 3, line 13, decrease the amount by \$47,300,000,000.

On page 3, line 14, decrease the amount by \$26,100,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, decrease the amount by \$30,500,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, decrease the amount by \$4,700,000,000.

On page 3, line 20, decrease the amount by \$25,600,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, decrease the amount by \$51,000,000,000.

On page 3, line 22, decrease the amount by \$47,300,000,000.

On page 3, line 23, decrease the amount by \$26,100,000,000.

On page 3, line 24, decrease the amount by \$30,500,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$36,190,000.

On page 4, line 5, increase the amount by \$441,680,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,133,860,000.

On page 4, line 7, increase the amount by \$4,798,780,000.

On page 4, line 8, increase the amount by \$6,988,760,000.

On page 4, line 9, increase the amount by \$8,794,210,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$36,190,000.

On page 4, line 14, increase the amount by \$441,680,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by \$2,133,860,000.

On page 4, line 16, increase the amount by \$4,798,780,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by \$6,988,760,000.

On page 4, line 18, increase the amount by \$8,794,210,000.

On page 4, line 22, increase the amount by \$4,736,190,000.

On page 4, line 23, increase the amount by \$26,041,680,000.

On page 4, line 24, increase the amount by \$53,133,860,000.

On page 4, line 25, increase the amount by \$52,098,780,000.

On page 5, line 1, increase the amount by \$33,088,760,000.

On page 5, line 2, increase the amount by \$39,294,210,000.

On page 5, line 7, increase the amount by \$4,736,190,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$30,777,870,000.

On page 5, line 9, increase the amount by \$83,911,730,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$136,010,510,000.

On page 5, line 11, increase the amount by \$169,099,270,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$208,393,480,000.

On page 5, line 15, increase the amount by \$4,736,190,000.

On page 5, line 16, increase the amount by \$30,777,870,000.

On page 5, line 17, increase the amount by \$83,911,730,000.

On page 5, line 18, increase the amount by \$136,010,510,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$169,099,270,000.

On page 5, line 20, increase the amount by \$208,393,480,000.

On page 26, line 12, increase the amount by \$36,190,000.

On page 26, line 13, increase the amount by \$36,190,000.

On page 26, line 16, increase the amount by \$441,680,000.

On page 26, line 17, increase the amount by \$441,680,000.

On page 26, line 20, increase the amount by \$2,133,860,000.

On page 26, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,133,860,000.

On page 26, line 24, increase the amount by \$4,798,780,000.

On page 26, line 25, increase the amount by \$4,798,780,000.

On page 27, line 3, increase the amount by \$6,988,760,000.

On page 27, line 4, increase the amount by \$6,988,760,000.

On page 27, line 7, increase the amount by \$8,794,210,000.

On page 27, line 8, increase the amount by \$8,794,210,000.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, Senator SPECTER will talk about this amendment. Essentially, this amendment would repeal the AMT permanently, as it relates to middle-income Americans. It is currently wrong that we have this tax. It was never intended to be a tax that would cover 20 million Americans.

It was supposed to hit high-income individuals who were avoiding taxes, using legal tax vehicles but basically avoiding paying any income tax. It has turned into a monster where literally 20 million Americans would be subject to the tax unless it is adjusted.

This budget presumes that it will be abated for this year. There is no reason to keep these revenues in the baseline because we know we will do this again next year and the year after that. It is time to correct this permanently and stop having these illusory revenues, which we turn around and spend, and it creates inappropriate expectations and leads to less fiscal discipline here.

This is an attempt to address the issue by essentially repealing the AMT and addressing the fact that if we don't do this, 20 million Americans will be hit with this tax, and that was never the intention of the Federal Government, to get revenues from them. It is wrong to have it on the books.

The Senator from Pennsylvania will come over to speak to this around 11:30 or so. The Democratic side may have another amendment relative to this issue.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I think the amendment the ranking member has set up for Senator SPECTER doesn't actually have full repeal. Instead, what it does is change the individual alternative minimum tax from its current two-rate structure of 26 percent and 28 percent to the single 24-percent rate that was in effect prior to 1993. I believe that is what the Specter amendment does.

The first priority, of course, for dealing with the AMT is to protect families who have not been subject to it previously. So our resolution acknowledges this priority and provides a 1-year patch to prevent the alternative minimum tax from affecting another 20 million American households. That is at a cost of \$62 billion.

I would prefer that cost be offset, but last year that was not the will of the body. It was not the will of the body in the very clear and compelling vote. So we don't have it offset in our resolution this year.

Our resolution acknowledges the political reality that the will of this body is to extend alternative minimum tax relief without paying for it. Restructuring the AMT, as Senator SPECTER proposes, is even more expensive. The Specter amendment would lose \$185 billion in revenue, and it is not paid for in any way—by spending reductions or other revenue—and therefore it simply gets added to the deficit and debt. If it were adopted as is, the resolution would be in deficit in every year of the budget window.

Mr. President, I don't think that is fiscally responsible, so I am offering an amendment that accomplishes the same policy purpose but requires that it be offset, paid for, so that it is not